

UPSTAIRS BULLETIN

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An Educational Group

Originally the Bulletin was to be, partially informative on dance, and to give news of student activities. There was also the faint hope of keeping in touch with old students from the past. The most appreciative of the Bulletin have not been the students of the school but rather friends and acquaintances outside of the school. Student that have been given the most are the least thoughtful in writing. It is not that they are so frantically busy - but mostly laziness and only caring to write as they have had some personal triumph to report. Waiting for good news to write is like waiting for a ship that never comes in. Of that rather impressive group we had in the 40's only three have been letter writers - JOHN SHARPE, BILL MALONEY and BUD TYGETT. Of the newer group KAREN TIMS has been a prolific writer, not only to us but to others in the school as well. JORENE HOLAS and LAUREN ROUSE have been in and out of the city for Nutcracker and belatedly came in for a lesson. KATHRYN JOHNSON wrote only when she had a great disappointment and MARTY INCLE when she could say she danced at Kennedy Center. We do appreciate receiving news, when it is news, from our friends and students all over the world. We were saddened to hear the VALERIE ROSAY had passed away in New York. Mother of BETTINA ROSAY she was a prominent figure in the local dance field back in the 30's - as a commentator on dance with a witty and sometimes bitter tongue. Also DR. GEORGE ROSE, father of KAREN ROSE recently passed away. He was our favorite osteopath for years treating and repairing many a dancer to get them back on their feet, until he retired to Galesburg, Illinois. Via the grapevine we hear that ROBERTA REHBERG has withdrawn from her thankless tasks with the Milwaukee Ballet Company. BARBARA STEELE has taken over the classes of JOE KAMINSKI at the Eleanor Wilson School in Winnetka. Have you noticed JACK TYGETT'S name in bold type as head of the Theatre Dance De-

partment at the School of Performing Arts in San Diego, California. While I'm a bit on the past and in the "what's become of the department", we wonder about professionals who were once in the school - DANIA KRUPSKA, ERIK KRISTEN, and RALPH LINN; about old friends - LEE FOLEY, DRUSCILLA SCHROEDER, JAC ABBOTT and GRACE & KURT GRAFF; and former students - BUDDY SULLIVAN, BETTE KILBRIDE, RONNY FRASIER, AUDRE JOHNSON, PAUL KRUMM and ALEXIS HOFF. No reward will be offered for information but, we'd like to hear about them if anyone has knowledge of their whereabouts. ELAINE PETRICOFF a summer student (60-63) from MYRL LAURENCE'S in Cincinnati, Ohio, has progressed as an actress and is now playing the lead in "The Me Nobody Knows" in New York. DONNA MILLS, another SC student turned actress, was in town for a week to pump up ratings for her NBC show "The Good Life". At the same time her recent movie "Play Misty for Me" was at the Chicago Theatre. JOHN BARKER is making a career of translating Russian Dance text books into English having had several trips to Leningrad where he worked with Vera Kostrovitskaya, a senior teacher in the Leningrad Choreographic School. DARRELL & SALLY NOTARA are now in the local scene hoping to stir up some mid-west bookings. KIM (Michell) BADGER recently moved permanently to Toronto, Canada moving her family bag and baggage. JULIE WALDER is having a busy year dancing with Gus Gordano's Dance Company as well as teaching in his school, ours too, and will in January help Florence Voss while CUZ SUTTON is away. JAN ORR is teaching one day a week for Sue Ettlinger in Highland Park as well as keeping up her classes at Northwestern and at SC. BILL GARY announces his coming wedding to be Christmas Day at

the Bahai Temple - it is to be a far out affair. SUZI BOLIN'S name appearing in the columns and getting great notices for her playing Cinderella in Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical at Mill Run Theatre. EDNA BAUM back in the city from Huntley, Illinois and happy to be back in circulation. PEGGY MORNER LYMAN is back in New York and is now rehearsing with David Merrick's new show under Gower Champion. JUDY CONWAY selling culture to the Laplanders again - this time in the "Dollar Princess". Her mother was in recently for a visit and tells us that Judy and John will be back here in the spring. JILL SHELLENBERGER is a Pennsylvania Ballet trainee. KAREN TIMS studying with Larry Rhodes and Maggie Black writes that RANDI SCHULTZ is back in New York working with a small group. Young adults in the Nutcracker performance will be VANNESSA MERIA, KATHLEEN FLYNN, DEAN BADOLATO, JORENE HOLAS and LUREN ROUSE... and of course SC trained DOLORES LIPINSKI. Among the children both SCOTT SCHLEXLER and LYNN ZIOLKA are alternating in the part of the Nutcracker. LORETTA ELSKE and LYNN CHERVONY are alternating as Clara. ROBIN FRANK and SCOTT FRANK are also in the group. There was little enthusiasm among our students to be in it this year due to past experiences of long rehearsals and the difficulty of getting to McCormick Place. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet recently presented JOHN NEUMEIER'S Ballet "Rondo". Unfortunately, it was not announced until a few days before it was to be performed, so it was missed by us all. That company had been either poor or pornographic the past two years so there was little interest in getting tickets in advance. NEUMEIER'S ballet was well received by the press. RUTH ANN KOESUN back from a State Department Tour with the First Chamber Dance Company - very happy about it all. The company resumes its touring in January. CHARLES BENNETT has increased the company to eight dancers and is to be commended on his success and fortitude in surviving a great many changes in the past few years. The Yoga and Health Class on Tuesday evenings has always been one of the most faithfully attended classes for adults.

Non-advertised and in existence for about five years the class is composed of people high in their respective professions. There have been composers in the class, musicians and singers, radio announcers, physical education teachers and athletes, writers and teachers of many subjects, salesmen, dancing teachers and dancers, and secretaries. At this moment we have an especially interesting group, among them MARILYN MAC NAMEE who is an Orthopedist - SONYA GUTTMAN is Director of Donor relations for the University of Chicago - LIA GREEN is managing Editor of a Journal in Social Sciences at the University - JUDY HARTNETT does parent - infant education for the deaf - JOAN FALLART teaches English and Laboratory Science at Loop College - JOAN KANEL-LOPOULOS is a supervisor of classes for the deaf - JIM MERCHUT is Personnel Director at Dr. Scholls - FAYE HANKIN is Secretary to a strategist in Military Science at the University of Chicago - MARY GEHR is a highly successful painter Betsy Davis is an Interior Designer - ANNE SROTYR does parent-infant education for the blind - WILLIAM CLARK is director of the Food and Drug Administration for this district - JAN HANZEING is a Secretary Manager and the balance of the class are teachers, secretaries or business people. Once in the class few people ever drop from it so there are rarely any openings for new people. On an early Christmas card we hear that LAUREL PARKER is to be married this month in Honolulu.

STOP THE WORLD WE'D LIKE TO GET OFF!

What a blessing that my teachers, Adolph Bolm, Veschlav Swoboda, Michael Fokine and Laurent Novikoff did not live to witness this ugly present. Mr. Bolm had been a defender of the innovators of the 20's and the early 30's but they were a different breed of thought provoking creators (Graham, Kreutzberg and Wigman) than these of today are out to shock and repulse. Outside of the Kirov no dancer today has the aplomb, line or

perfect male presence that Swoboda possessed. True, there had been a running battle between Fokine and Graham but it was a clash of intelligent tastes. Mr. Novikoff was more concerned with the trend of ballet itself and disliked what he saw. He complained of one prominent choreographer changing her artistic skin every season. I shudder to think what those men with their great artistic backgrounds would make of Bejart's sterile unisex offerings.

Bejart's choreography reaches from A to B and little further. His company gives the nearest to a total unisex performance of any company today. The boys are just "big women" and the girls - neat and trim but blah. There is evidence that many in the company are excellent dancers but the way they are used one would never know. The choreography with few recognizable steps or movements consists of grounded-squats, wild extensions, grabs and gropes, contrived posturings with no apparent motivation, flaying effeminate arms, pants and grunts, an excess of false emotion, and not a bit of honest sex even though they are crotch to crotch half the time. The ballets are full of pregnant stares, borrowed ideas and formations and I wished that he had borrowed a few good steps. I distrust the intelligence of the audiences or critics who work so hard to defend this unbelievable nothingness. Certainly this is the ugliest period in history but wouldn't it seem that the theatre would be a place to divorce us from it rather than to sink us deeper into it. Why not be above it - not of it?

Balanchine began the trend for disjointed choreography discarding all connecting steps - such as chasse, glissade, pas de bourree, pas de basque, sisol, contretemps, balance waltz, polka, mazurka, etc. The dancer now merely runs or walks from one position into another. So indoctrinated now are the critics that the moment they recognize a step it is immediately labeled "dancing schoolish" or uncreative. The trend of these non-ballets, sexually motivated, usually ignoring the music, contriving disipient body positions, minus connecting movements do seem to appeal to the uninitiated audiences, because they

believe they are witnessing something very new and starting (avant grade - they are told).

Advance publicity and reviews often lead to bitter disappointments for the theatre going public. So often the highly publicized attractions - need publicity - because they may not be first rate or have had bad notices in New York or London. The gullible public can be cajoled into believing these press releases and end up liking what they see only because they think they must.

Naturally, we cannot see every attraction that comes to town. We like music too and attend regularly the Fine Arts Quartet, the Symphony, some Opera and various concerts that we wish to see. Possibly we see half of the outside dance attractions and that half last year added up to 22 performances. Some were enjoyable, many were wasted evenings and a few were worth while. Companies that did not come up to their publicity or advance press were the Australian Ballet with Nureyev, the Netherlands Ballet, the Dance Theatre of Harlam, Bejart and with this I would add the Ballet Theatre performance of "Giselle" when danced by Frac-ci and Bruhn - an entirely different story when danced by Makarova and Nagy.

Often the ethnic groups are far more interesting to see than the Ballet companies because they are less pretentious. At least, until they are influenced by their bookers and managers who insist on up-dating them. When that happens they lose their real ethnic charm.

I never felt dance more right than when we recently saw the Classical Khmer Dancers of Cambodia. It could not be expressed any better than in August Rodin's words - "It is impossible to see human nature brought to a higher state of perfection". Theirs was a perfect blending of music, dance, drama, costume, humor and expression. To a certain extent in a lesser developed way, the dancers from Morocco had the same thing; not so perfected but with a wonderful basic human quality that should be in all dance. On the contrary the Senegalese Company was over produced with night clubby-lights,

lots of noise and could have come directly from the Cotton Club. The public seems to go for anything that is loud and brassy. I was personally fond of all the Yugoslavian Dance Groups. However, this years Frula had been tampered with by its managers and was not up to their previous engagement here. I remember with pleasure previous companies - "Kolo", "Lado", "Tanec" and "Lindo" which we saw this past summer in Dubrovnik.

One of the important reasons for having a critic, or listening to one, as I see it, is to help raise the level of public taste. The only Chicago critic (excluding Music critics) who has done this is Claudia Cassidy, like her or not, we do.

Recently, the Classical Khmer Ballet of Cambodia performed before an audience of hoydenish overdressed and under dressed, ill mannered in good theater department, new and old alike. They presented a program of extreme refinement and elegance and made them like it. There was truly 1400 years between those on stage and those in the audience and can you say we have progressed? The Tribune critic quibbles that it was no show at all. If Linda Winer after seeing that exquisite performance can merely evaluate it "that the magnificent costumes requiring three wardrobe mistresses and two jewel keepers - is the only flashy part of the show"... she needs to go a bit further in her dance education. Samackson on the Daily News compliments the audience on their sophistication in being able to "enjoy this exotic Hindu inspired dance form that has no virtuosity". It takes a person with an educated body to realize that their virtuosity is indeed more difficult than multiple pirouettes or leaps and their legs which seem to be doing nothing at all do things that most ballet dancers could never do. The Today newspaper, not too generous with space for dance, may or may not have printed Ann Barzel's review - we could not find it.

I have always felt that when dance was at its best there was a kinesthetic aura, permeated from it that I myself could feel. This is an instinctive feeling for movement passed from performer to the viewer. There is also the radiation of the dancers personality that accents this kinesthetic response.

Being too critical before one senses these responses can build a wall between you and the performer. Later, after one has seen the performance one can ask oneself all sorts of questions. Was there a consistency of style in the movement and period?

How was the choice of music and did it have the proper empathy for the ideas the choreographer wished to express? Did it have a plan, design, balance, and artistic invention. Was there an equal appeal to sight, sound and emotional feeling for the viewer? Many more things can be asked when your final judgement is made. Critics do make snap judgements and often when I read raves for things that are so childish and poorly constructed I begin to wonder about my own sanity.

It all adds up to the fact that dance is a strange art - judged mostly on personal or animal appeal - because it deals with the body and seldom the brain - I doubt there is any solution.

ON YOUTH

Quotes from Jean-Francois Revel's book

"Without Marx or Jesus".

"Youth is dominated by narcissism, selfadmiration and intolerance - all of which are characteristic of the phases of sexual development anterior to the oedipus complex."

"What characterizes the narcissistic stage is the child's desire to have everything at once. If he is not satisfied, then he takes refuge in the hallucinatory fulfillment of his desires. The need for omnipotence makes progressive action impossible, for narcissism ignores the principle of reality - and refuses to admit the incompatibility of contradictory solutions. To the narcissistic child the idea of making choices is unbearable."

*** SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL! ***